

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 AID-05 IGA-02 IO-13 SAL-01 OES-06 SIL-01
LAB-04 TRSE-00 EB-08 COME-00 ACDA-07 OMB-01 MC-02
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TAGS: PINT, PFOR, BL

SUBJ: BANZER IN INTERVIEW, APPLAUDS CARTER HUMAN RIGHTS
CONCERN AND MAINTAINS PROHIBITION ON POLITICAL PARTY
ACTIVITY

1. SUMMARY. LA PAZ PRESS OF MARCH 3 CARRIES ARTICLES ON
A RECENT INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT BANZER BY RADIO CRUZ DEL
SUR PROGRAM FACETAS. ACCORDING TO ARTICLES, BANZER SAID THAT
HE AGREED WITH PRESIDENT CARTER'S POSITION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
AND APPLAUDS HIS (CARTER'S) INITIATIVES TO SUPPORT WORLDWIDE
POLICIES WHICH GUARANTEE THE EXERCISE OF SUCH RIGHTS. HE
ADDED IN THE SAME CONTEXT THAT BOLIVIA ITSELF MAINTAINED A
POLICY OF NON-INTERVENTION IN THE INTERNAL MATTERS OF OTHER
NATIONS AND WOULD CONTINUE TO ABSTAIN FROM JUDGING THE
INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF OTHERS. REGARDING RECENT PRESSURES
FROM POLITICAL PARTIES FOR THE REOPENING OF POLITICAL
ACTIVITIES IN BOLIVIA, BANZER SAID THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
THE ARMED FORCES WOULD ALLOW THE RETURN OF POLITICAL
PARTIES TO CONTROL OF GOVERNMENT WHEN THE TIME IS
RIGHT AND WHEN THE PARTIES CAN GUARANTEE POLITICAL
STABILITY, PEACE, UNITY AND WELFARE FOR THE BOLIVIAN
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PEOPLE. BANZER SAID BOLIVIA WILL VIGOROUSLY PURSUE
SEA OUTLET NEGOTIATIONS AND CLAIMED THE CORRECTNESS OF
THE BOLIVIAN POSITION ON INTERNATIONAL TIN COUNCIL
MATTERS. THE PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS
UNDERScores HIS INTEREST IN PREVENTING THIS QUESTION
FROM BECOMING AN ISSUE IN U.S. - BOLIVIAN RELATIONS.
END SUMMARY.

2. PRESIDENT BANZER UTILIZED HIS INTERVIEW WITH FACETAS TO REITERATE THAT THE NOVEMBER 1974 PROHIBITION ON POLITICAL ACTIVITIES REMAIN IN FULL FORCE AND WILL CONTINUE UNTIL THE PARTIES DEMONSTRATE THAT UPON RETURNING TO POWER THEY CAN GUARANTEE UNITY, WELL-BEING, PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE AND POLITICAL STABILITY FOR ALL BOLIVIANS. HE STRESSED THE CIVILIAN PARTICIPATION IN HIS GOVERNMENT AND THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ACHIEVEMENTS WHICH HAVE RESULTED FROM THE POLITICAL RECESS AS WELL AS THE "VISIBLE TRANSFORMATION OF THE NATIONAL CONSCIENCE" SINCE AUGUST 1971.

3. LABOR UNIONS, HE STATED, MUST DEFEND THE LEGITIMATE INTERESTS OF THE WORKERS AGAINST THE MANAGEMENT SECTOR AND MUST NOT -- AND SHOULD NOT BE PERMITTED TO -- INTERFERE IN POLITICS.

4. WHEN QUESTIONED ABOUT PRESIDENT CARTER'S POLICY OF USING RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AS A BELLWEATHER FOR RELATIONS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES, BANZER REPLIED THAT HIS VIEWS COINCIDE WITH THE CARTER INITIATIVES, BUT THAT IN ITS INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, BOLIVIA RESPECTS THE PRINCIPLE OF NON INTERVENTION IN THE DOMESTIC AFFAIRS OF OTHERS.

5. ON THE SEA OUTLET ISSUE, HE EXPRESSED OPTIMISM THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS WILL CONTINUE PROGRESSING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DESPITE PROBLEMS, CITING HIS RECENT EXCHANGE OF LETTERS WITH CHILEAN PRESIDENT PINOCHET AS EVIDENCE OF THE WILL TO SEEK PRACTICAL, STABLE AND DURABLE SOLUTIONS. REFERRING TO THE ARMAMENTS RACE IN THE AREA, HE MAINTAINED THAT BOLIVIAN ARMS PURCHASES RESPOND SOLELY TO REPLACEMENT NEEDS AND THE MILITARY BUDGET REMAINS PROPORTIONAL TO OTHER PRIORITY PUBLIC EXPENSES SUCH AS THOS FOR EDUCATION AND HEALTH.

6. THE PRESIDENT EXPRESSED SATISFACTION THAT RECENT RISES IN THE PRICE OF TIN HAVE VINDICATED THE ORIGINAL BOLIVIAN POSITION BEFORE THE INTERNATIONAL TIN COUNCIL INSISTING ON AN INCREASE IN THE MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM LEVELS OF THE PRICE SCALE MAKING THEM COMMENSURATE WITH COSTS OF PRODUCTION. THE BRIGHT FUTURE FOR TIN, HE CONTENDED, ASSURES THE DEVELOPMENTAL ADVANCES OF THE COUNTRY.

7. EMBASSY COMMENT, BANZER'S PUBLIC AGREEMENT WITH

THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION'S PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS (ASSUMING HE WAS QUOTED CORRECTLY) INDICATES HIS CONTINUING INTEREST IN PREVENTING SUCH MATTERS FROM BECOMING AN ISSUE IN U.S. - BOLIVIAN RELATIONS, AS THEY HAVE IN NEARBY COUNTRIES. THE PRESIDENT AND OTHER SENIOR BOLIVIAN OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN PROCLAIMING (IN OUR VIEW CORRECTLY) THAT BOLIVIA SHOULD BE JUDGED IN THE CONTEXT OF THE ARMED FORCES EFFORT TO RETURN PEACE AND STABILITY TO THIS PREVIOUSLY TROUBLED COUNTRY. HIS STATEMENT ON A REOPENING OF POLITICAL PARTY ACTIVITIES WAS PROVOKED BY THE ANNOUNCEMENT LAST WEEK THAT THE FALANCE SOCIALISTA BOLIVIANA PARTY (FSB) INTENDS TO HOLD A NATIONAL CONVENTION IN AUGUST 1977 (BEING REPORTED BY AIRGRAM), FOLLOWED THE NEXT DAY BY A GOB STATEMENT THAT POLITICAL PARTY ACTIVITIES CONTINUED TO BE IN LEGAL "RECESS". THE FSB ANNOUNCEMENT HAS PUT PRESSURE ON THE PRESIDENT TO DEFINE MORE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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REGARDING AN EVENTUAL RETURN TO CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT IN BOLIVIA. WE BELIEVE IT ALSO MARKS THE END OF THE PERIOD (WHICH BEGAN IN NOVEMBER 1974) IN WHICH THE MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES HAVE BEEN RELATIVELY CONTENT TO KEEP A LOW-PROFILE AND LET THE BOLIVIAN ARMED FORCES DEAL WITH THE NATION'S PROBLEMS. BANZER'S INTERVIEW IS JUST AS VAGUE ON THIS AS HIS PREVIOUS PRONOUNCEMENTS, IF NOT MORE SO, AND IT WILL NOT SATISFY THE AWAKENING ASPIRATIONS OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES. BANZER IS REITERATING TO THE PARTIES THAT HE INTENDS TO ALLOW CIVILIAN PARTICIPATION IN RUNNING THE GOVERNMENT ON HIS TERMS AND HIS TIMING AND NOT THEIRS. END COMMENT.
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Message Attributes

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